

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF ANTHONY RAY HINTON

HON. TERRI A. SEWELL

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2018

Ms. SEWELL of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I stand before you today to honor the extraordinary life of Mr. Anthony Ray Hinton. Mr. Hinton was on death row for 30 years before being cleared of a crime he never committed. He has now written a memoir relaying his experiences and frequently speaks about the need for reform of our nation's criminal justice system. As we debate passage of legislation which would transform our criminal justice system, I believe it is important that Mr. Hinton's story is told and that his call for reform is heard in the halls of Congress.

The story that led to Mr. Hinton's wrongful incarceration began in 1985 after the murder of two men in two separate armed robbery incidents at Birmingham restaurants. Later that year, a third restaurant manager in Bessemer was shot and wounded. The manager then identified Mr. Hinton from a photo lineup, even though Hinton was working at a warehouse 15 miles away on the night of the shooting. Despite the lack of evidence against him, Mr. Hinton was soon arrested.

Police recovered six slugs from the crime scenes and the state forensics department matched them to a rusty .38 special that detectives took from Mr. Hinton's mother's home, where he lived. Mr. Hinton was charged with two counts of capital murder. He maintained his innocence and passed a lie detector test before his trial.

During his arrest, Mr. Hinton says police refused to explain the charges against him, but they assured him that he would be convicted simply because he was black. Mr. Hinton's court-appointed attorney believed that most black people would lie about committing a crime, so he failed to represent the case adequately. Despite limited evidence and a sworn testimony provided by Mr. Hinton's employer stating that he had been at work on the night of the robbery, the jury convicted Mr. Hinton and sentenced him to death.

To pass the days while serving his sentence, Mr. Hinton began to read and organized a book club for fellow prisoners. He made friends and says he never saw any of his fellow inmates as 'monsters.' Instead, he learned to see the good in all people and believes it was his attitude that helped him survive.

After a decade on death row, the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery took on Mr. Hinton's case. During their appeal, evidence was introduced from three forensic experts. Still, the Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals refused to overturn his convictions or grant a new trial. For 16 years, the Equal Justice Initiative continued to push for a retrial. Finally, in 2014, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Mr. Hinton's original defense lawyer was "con-

stitutionally deficient," and remanded his case to the lower court for retrial. After the Supreme Court ruling, the Jefferson County District Attorney moved to drop his case.

On April 3, 2015, Mr. Hinton was released from prison after three decades on death row. Mr. Hinton had 30 years of his life taken away from him. During this time his mother, a woman who never ceased to believe in her son's innocence, passed away. Mr. Hinton says it broke his heart to realize she would never have the opportunity to see her son as a free man again. Mr. Hinton was punished for another person's crimes. But if he were to live the rest of his life in anger, he would have even more of his life taken away. In his own words, "The rest of my life is mine. Alabama took 30 years. That was enough."

Mr. Hinton's wrongful conviction shines a light on the failures of our criminal justice system. He has written a memoir, *The Sun Does Shine: How I Found Life and Freedom on Death Row*, and has travelled the country, giving readings and talks on his experiences. Today, Mr. Hinton continues to work with the Equal Justice Initiative, sharing his story nationwide. He even spoke at the Peace and Justice Summit, held by the Equal Justice Initiative, earlier this year. Mr. Hinton's work bringing awareness to the issue of criminal justice has encouraged advocates across the country to join the fight for prison reform.

Mr. Hinton is far from alone in his experience with our criminal justice system. Since 1973, a total of 158 people have been released from death row after evidence of their innocence was uncovered. As Congress debates passage of legislation to reform our criminal justice system, the lessons learned from Mr. Hinton's case, and from others who have wrongfully been sent to death row, must be remembered.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the 7th Congressional District and the State of Alabama, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the life and the extraordinary sacrifices made by Mr. Anthony Ray Hinton in our pursuit of a more perfect Union. He is a symbol of hope and perseverance in our fight for reform. His legacy of resilience will lead the way for equality in our justice system.

TRIBUTE TO SHARON SCHULTZE

HON. SUSAN A. DAVIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 13, 2018

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the passing of a truly dedicated public servant, Sharon Schultze. Sharon was a tireless advocate for social justice and civility, a loyal senior Congressional aide, and generous mentor. Sharon dedicated her life to serving the poor, the downtrodden, and the most vulnerable. She will be remembered by all those who knew her for her selflessness and love. Sharon was born and raised in Lin-

coln, Nebraska and moved to San Diego after getting married. She was instrumental in creating a ground breaking program at the University of San Diego's Law School, the Mira Mesa Mediation Center, which helped people from diverse backgrounds resolve conflict peacefully and civilly. The center later developed into the National Conflict Resolution Center.

Sharon worked for Bob Filner throughout his entire political career, from the San Diego School Board to San Diego City Council to the United States Congress. Sharon passionately served the people of San Diego for over three decades, taking on various responsibilities throughout Filner's different elected offices. One of her favorite projects while working for Congressman Filner was helping him chose the district winner of the Congressional Art Competition wherein high school students from every congressional district in the country compete for an opportunity to display their artwork in the Halls of Congress.

Her favorite role, and the one she found most rewarding, was that of advocate. Sharon took the most joy out of writing legislation that promoted veterans and San Diego residents.

Perhaps the achievements of which Sharon was most proud were her contributions to the veteran community. She helped draft and pass the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act of 2008, which provides full, four-year tuition to military veterans who enlisted after September 11, 2001 attending public universities across the country. She was instrumental in the passage of legislation supporting Filipino veterans and Merchant Marines who served the United States during World War II receiving full veteran benefits, which they had been previously denied.

Sharon was an amazing, accomplished woman. Her strong worth ethic and professionalism made her a role model and devoted mentor to the young people who looked to her for guidance both in San Diego and in Washington, DC. My office and I were on the receiving end of some of her mentorship. Soon after I was elected to Congress, Sharon was the first to offer guidance and support. Her best quality, noted by many of her friends and family, was that Sharon was a gifted listener. She was there for whoever needed her help, without regard for her time and energy. Sharon bestowed unconditional positive support, kindness, compassion, and empathy to those around her, assuring them that they were loved and valued. She shared her ideas and common sense with others, always making sure to keep people's best interest in mind. She never gave up on making a difference in the world.

Our thoughts go out to her partner of nearly 30 years, Doug Duffield; her three children, Blair, David, and Carol; and Natalie and Zachary, her two grandchildren, who made her heart smile.

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